



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ARIZONA THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS BIG-HEARTED, VIBRANT NEW COMEDY, “AMERICAN MARIACHI”

“Why can’t a girl be in a Mariachi band?” is a question only answered by understanding music’s power to heal and connect, and the freedom to dream big, in Arizona Theatre Company’s production of *American Mariachi*, a new comedy from José Cruz González, the former playwright in residence at Childsplay, March 9-30 at the Temple of Music and Art in Tucson and April 4-21 at the Herberger Theater Center in Phoenix.

Called “a big-hearted musical play” by *The Denver Post*, ATC’s *American Mariachi* is directed by Christopher Acebo, the Associate Artistic Director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

It is the story of Lucha (Christen Celaya) who yearns to break the monotonous routine of caring for her ailing mother. Her solution: an all-girl mariachi band. But, it’s the 1970s and girls can’t be mariachis ... or can they?

As Lucha and her spunky cousin hunt for bandmates, dodge disapproving relatives, and bring mom along for the ride, they wonder: Will the band actually come together? As they practice, perform, and break with tradition, their music sparks a transformation in the lives of those around them, especially Lucha’s parents.

American Mariachi features gorgeous live mariachi music, under the musical direction of Cynthia Reifler Flores, “herself a pioneering real-life mariachi“ (*San Diego Tribune*) that will send your heart soaring and put a bounce in your step.

“Given Arizona’s rich diversity and our deep connection with and the impact of Mexican and Latino arts and culture, ***American Mariachi*** offers a unique and uplifting blending of the two in a warm, funny and truly personal perspective,” said ATC Artistic Director David Ivers.

Tickets for ***American Mariachi*** are now on sale at www.arizonatheatre.org or at the Temple of Music & Art and Herberger Theater Center box offices.

In association with ATC’s presentation of *American Mariachi*, the "Trailblazing Women of Mariachi Music" exhibit will be on display, March 8 to May 5 at the historic Sosa Carrillo House, 151 S. Granada Ave. in downtown Tucson.

The Sosa Carrillo House is the first museum in Southern Arizona solely dedicated to Mexican-American history. This is the museum's inaugural exhibit. Researched and curated by Dr. Leonor Xochitl Perez, the exhibit presents the history of women in mariachi through vintage artifacts, mariachi suits, film and digital imagery.

Perez’s research shows women have performed mariachi professionally as instrumentalists and made other major contributions to this prized cultural art form for over 100 years, first in Mexico and then around the world. The exhibit is sponsored by Los Descendientes del Presidio de Tucson.

The exhibit will culminate with a Mariachi Women's Festival on Saturday, May 4 at 7:30 p.m. at the Leo Rich Theatre, 260 S Church Ave, in Tucson, featuring the Los Angeles-based, two-time Grammy-winning Mariachi Divas and local mariachi women's groups. For more information about the exhibit and music festival or related promotional images, please contact Betty Villegas at 520-850-5779, bjvillegas@yahoo.com.

American Mariachi will be followed by ***Things I Know to be True***, by Andrew Bovell, directed by Mark Clements (Tucson: April 20-May 11; Phoenix: May 16-june 2).

The 2018/2019 season is dedicated to Geri Silvi, ATC’s long-time Box Office Manager in Phoenix. The season is sponsored by I. Michael and Beth Kasser.

Telemundo is the Television Sponsor for American Mariachi in Phoenix and Tucson; APS is the Production Sponsor in Phoenix and La Caliente and La Buena are Radio Media Sponsors in Tucson.

ATC has standardized curtain times in Tucson and Phoenix. Performance times will be: Tuesdays through Saturday evenings at 7:30 p.m., Sunday evenings at 7:00 p.m. and all matinees will be held at 2:00 p.m.

For more information, go to www.arizonatheatre.org or call the box office in Tucson at (520) 622-2823 or in Phoenix at (602) 256-6995.

BIOGRAPHIES

José Cruz González (Playwright) plays include *Under a Baseball Sky American* (The Old Globe commission), *American Mariachi* (Arizona Theatre Company, Denver Center Theatre Company, The Old Globe), *Sunsets & Margaritas* (Denver Center Theatre Company, Theatre Works), *September Shoes* (Geva Theatre), *The San Patricios* (PCPA), *Among the Darkest Shadows* (Wharton Center for Performing Arts) and *The Long Road Today* (South Coast Repertory). Mr. González has written for PAZ, the Emmy Award nominated television series produced by Discovery Kids for The Learning Channel. *The Astronaut Farmworker* (La Jolla Playhouse) was a 2016 PEN Center USA Literary Award Finalist. He is a member of the College of Fellows of the American Theatre, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. A collection of his plays, *Nine Plays by José Cruz González Magical Realism & Mature Themes in Theatre for Young Audiences* was published by the University of Texas Press in 2009. Mr. González was a recipient of a 2004 TCG/Pew National Theatre Residency grant. He is a professor at California State University Los Angeles and a member of The Dramatists Guild of America and TYA/USA.

Christopher Acebo (Director) is making his directing debut at Arizona Theatre Company. He is the Associate Artistic Director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival where he has designed over 30 productions including *Mother Road*, *Othello*, *Fingersmith*, *Head Over Heels*, *King Lear*, *Streetcar Named Desire*, *Equivocation*, *Cat on A Hot Tin Roof*, *Hamlet*, *The Book of Will*, among others. His work has been seen on Broadway in the Tony Award winning play *All the Way*. Design credits include *Zoot Suit*, *Chavez Ravine* (Ovation Award, Costumes), *Water & Power*, *Electricidad*, *Lydia*, *Waiting for Godot* (Ovation nomination, Costumes), *Living Out*, *Palestine*, *New Mexico*, *Breakfast*, *Lunch and Dinner* at Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles. Lincoln Center: *The Clean House* (and Yale Rep), *BAM: Throne of Blood*. Other regional credits include production with Culture Clash (seven world premiere productions), American Rep, Berkeley Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, Goodman Theater, Guthrie, Yale Rep, Denver Center, Kennedy Center, South Coast Rep, Portland Center Stage, Artist Rep. Christopher was an ensemble member of the nationally acclaimed Cornerstone Theater Company in Los Angeles from 2000-2006. Currently, he serves on the Board of Directors for Theatre Communication Group and as the Chair of the Oregon Arts Commission. He received his MFA from the University of California, San Diego and his BA in Political Science from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and was a recipient of the Inaugural Award for Outstanding Advocacy for Latina/o Voices in the New American Theatre.

Cynthia Reifler Flores (Music Director) began as a classical violinist but has since played with mariachis ranging from bar bands to the Grammy winning Mariachi Divas. She is best known for her ten-year role as the leader of Mariachi Reyna de Los Angeles, the first all-female mariachi of international import. Ms. Flores directs the mariachi programs at University of California: Riverside and California State University: Los Angeles, where she earned her Masters degree in Latin American Studies with her thesis entitled, "Origins and Continuance of Women's Participation in Mariachi and the Cultural and Transnational Implications: California." Cynthia has performed as musical director, arranger and performer on other works by José Cruz González, including a joint production for the Denver Center Theatre and the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego of *American Mariachi*. She lives in California with her son, Bruce, her husband, Pedro Flores, a renowned mariachi musician, and, an enthusiastic dog.

Christen Celaya (Lucha) is a company member of Teatro Luna in Los Angeles, where she is currently based. Recent LA productions include Teatro Luna's *The Times* and *Lovesick*. She also played Celia in The Southland Company's production of *As You Like It*. She was previously based in New York City where she performed in Off-Broadway productions of *The Imaginary Invalid*, *The King of Infinite Space* and the title role in *Miss Julie*. Christen is also a filmmaker with two short films premiering this year, *La Sirena* and *Holes*. Christen is a recent graduate with a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Washington and a published author.

Satya Jnani Chavez (Boli) is making her Arizona Theatre Company debut. Regional Credits include *Evocation to Visible Appearance*, *A Christmas Carol*, *You Across From Me*, *Soul of the World*, and *All This Togetherness* (Actors Theatre of Louisville); *Othello*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *Twelfth Night* (Colorado Shakespeare Festival); *The Happiest Song Plays Last* (Curious Theatre); *Jesus Christ Superstar* (The Arvada Center); *Black Elk Speaks*, and *Arabian Nights* (The Aurora Fox). Additional credits: Chavez, the recipient of the 2014 Kennedy Center National Irene Ryan Award for Acting, received her B.F.A. in Acting from The University of Colorado, and completed the 17/18 apprenticeship at Actors Theatre of Louisville.

Diana Burbano (Amalia) is a Colombian immigrant, Equity actor, playwright and teaching artist at South Coast Repertory and Breath of Fire Latina Theatre Ensemble. She is part of Center Theatre Group's Writers Workshop for 2018-2019 and is one of Alter Theatre's AlterLab 2019 commissioned playwrights. Diana's plays focus on female protagonists and social issues. Work: *Gargoyles*, *Ghosts of Bogota*, *Policarpa* (Blank Theatre 2018), *Fabulous Monsters* (Latinx Play Festival, San Diego Rep 2017), *Caliban's Island* (2017 Headwaters New Play Festival), *Siluetas*, about the artist Ana Mendieta, with Tom and Chris Shelton and *Linda*, (English and Spanish), which has been seen all over the world.

DANNY BOLERO (Federico) is returning to ATC after playing El Gallo in *The Fantasticks*. Broadway Credits: *In the Heights* (Kevin Replacement), *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (soundtrack) *Naphtali*. Off-Broadway: The Public Theater's *Miss You Like Hell* (Manuel) (Original cast soundtrack) *Bedbugs the Musical*, *Roughly Speaking*. National Tours: *In the Heights*, *Joseph*. Regional: *Informed Consent*, *Golem of Havana*, *City of Angels*, *Drowsy Chaperone*, *La Posada Majica*, *Nine*, *Evita*, *World Goes Round*, *Bark*, *Edwin Drood*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Selena*, *Side by Side* and *Cesar and Ruben*. Film: *Low Tide* (2019), *Rapid Eye Movement* (2019), *Top-Five*, *Revenge for Jolly*, *The Hitcher*, *La Causa*. TV: *Power*, *Blue Bloods*, *Bored to Death*, and *Law & Order*. He has recently finished production on writing and directing his first short film, *Life in the Key of Delusion* and is hard at work on his children's book, "Puppy Chulo."

Alicia Coca (Isabel), a 2018 Theater Arts graduate of UC Davis, is making her Equity debut with *American Mariachi*. At UC Davis, Alicia played the Leading Player in *Pippin!* (directed by Mindy Cooper) and Veronica in *Heathers the Musical*, and was a founding ensemble member and participant in the inaugural Ground and Field Theatre Festival (2017). She was also a featured singer in the 2018 Graham-a-Rama Cabaret (hosted by Graham Sobelman) at Sacramento Capital Stage. Most recently, she performed in Downtown Los Angeles as a lead Angel Vocalist in the 16th Annual *La Virgen de Guadalupe, Dios Inantzin* (written by Evelina Fernandez and directed by José Luis Valenzuela).

Eduardo Enrikez (Mateo): Training: The Royal Academy of Music, London. Theatre credits: *Destiny of Desire* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Goodman Theater, South Coast Rep), *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare Abridged* (Criterion Theatre London /U.K Tour), Raoul in *Eating Raoul* (Birdwell Theatre London), Bottom in *A Midsummer Nights Dream* (Courtyard

Theatre London), Chick and Georgie in *Time Square Angel* (Union Theatre London), *Saturday Night Fever* (Scandinavian Tour), *Hair* (European tour), Chris in *Miss Saigon* (Inland Empire Award best actor, Broadway World nomination) and Vittorio Vidal in *Sweet Charity* (Inland Empire Award best actor) (Candlelight Pavilion), Emcee in *Cabaret* (Garland Award nomination) (The Met Theatre), Mickey in *Blood Brothers* (Ada Award for best actor) and *Is This Anyway to Start a Marriage* (Whitefire Theatre), Houdini in *Ragtime* (The Hudson Theatre), and Jitter in *The Musical of Musicals*. Film credits: *Sin Frontera* (best actor award, Seattle Film Festival; best actor nomination, Beaufort International Film Festival), *Stigma*, *Emilio*, *Jornada al Norte*, *Dog Tags*, *The Immigrant*. Television Credits: *The Bridge* (FX), *Locked up Abroad* (National Geographic) and *Bluff* (Skyelove Productions).

Osiris Cuen (Gabby) is a professional actor, teaching artist, playwright and collaborative deviser who has been part of the Childsplay Ensemble since 2014. Childsplay is a nationally and internationally respected professional theatre company for young audiences based out of Tempe. Some of Osiris' favorite of roles are Cory in *Super Cowgirl and Mighty Miracle* also written by José Cruz González, Sophia in *Maddie's Fridge* by Anne Negri, Lizzie Martinez in *The Smartest Girl in the World* by Miriam Gonzales and David Saar's *The Yellow Boat*, all with Childsplay; Miguel in Lisa Loomer's *¡Bocón!* at Arizona State University, Phillipa in *Year of the Rooster* at Stray Cat Theatre, and Draco Malfoy in *A Very Potter Musical*. Osiris is a first place winner of the National Society of Arts and Letters (NSAL) Drama Competition (2015). Osiris won a playwriting competition and devised a play titled *The Night la Luna Disappeared* with Now & Then Creative Collective in collaboration with Phoenix Art Museum (PAM).

Marlene Montes (Soyla), born and raised in Arizona. is a San Diego-based artist. Her most notable credits include: Daniela - *In the Heights* (Moonlight Stage Productions/ Performance Riverside), Paulette - *Legally Blonde* (New Village Arts), Mazeppa - *Gypsy* (Cygnet Theatre). Other regional credits include: *Cabaret* (Cygnet Theatre); *The World Goes 'Round*, *South Pacific*, *Tommy*, *Miss Saigon* (Moonlight Stage Productions); *The 1940's Radio Hour*, *The Return to the Forbidden Planet*, *The Full Monty* (New Village Arts); *The Marvelous Wonderettes* (The Music and Theatre Company); 8-Track: *The Sounds of the 70s* (Derby Dinner Playhouse), *The Pajama Game* (Starlight Theatre). She obtained her B.F.A. in Musical Theatre from The University of Arizona.

Sol Castillo (Mino) Is making his A.T.C. debut. Last seen as Fred in *A Christmas Carol* at South Coast Repertory, his other theater credits include: Padre Perez in CalShakes debut of Octavio Solis' *Quixote Nuevo*. Also: Denver Center debut of *Sunsets and Margaritas. Of Mice and Men* at Pasadena Playhouse. *The Night Fairy*, *The Hollow Lands*, *Charlotte's Web*, *Sideway Stories from Wayside School* at South Coast Repertory. He is proud of his 8-season run as Refugio/Buzzard in Octavio Solis' *La Posada Magica*. Also as Medal of Honor recipient Eugene A. Obregon in the national tour of *Veteranos: A Legacy of Valor*. He also appeared as Rudy in the San Diego Repertory production of *Zoot Suit*. 20 years after his father starred in the triumphant Los Angeles production.

CREATIVE TEAM

Scenic Design: Efren Delgadillo, Jr.

Costume Design: Kish Finnegan

Lighting Design: Carolina Ortiz Herrera

Sound Design: Brian Jerome Peterson

Music Director: Cynthia Flores

Stage Manager: Bruno Ingram

Tickets for **American Mariachi** start at \$25 and are subject to change depending on time, date and section, and are available at www.arizonatheatre.org or by calling the box office at (520) 622-2823 in Tucson or (602) 256-6995 in Phoenix. Discounts are available for seniors and active military. A \$10 student ticket pricing is now available for all performances. Half-price rush tickets are available for balcony seating for all performances one hour prior to curtain at the ATC box office (subject to availability). **\$10 Community Night** performance in Tucson is Tuesday, March 12 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, April 7 at 7 p.m. in Phoenix. (Tickets must be purchased at the Temple of Music and Art or the Herberger Theater Center starting one hour prior to curtain. Tickets are first-come, first served. *Cash preferred.* Two tickets maximum per person.) For discounts for groups of 10 or more, call (520) 622-2823 in Tucson or (602) 256-6995 in Phoenix.

Arizona Theatre Company offers accessibility services for patrons with disabilities for select performances. **Audio Description** provides patrons with vision loss a running audio description of the movement and activities onstage through an infrared broadcast system. An Audio-Described performance is offered in Tucson on Thursday, March 28 at 2 p.m. and in Phoenix on Wednesday, April 10 at 7:30 p.m. and Thursday, April 18 at 2 p.m. Interested patrons with vision loss may request a tactile tour one hour prior to curtain. **American Sign Language Interpretation** is presented by professional, theatrically trained ASL-interpreters for people who have deafness or hearing impairment. An ASL-interpreted performance is offered in Tucson on Thursday March 28 at 7:30 p.m. and in Phoenix on Saturday, April 20 at 2 p.m. **Open Captioning** allows patrons to read the play's dialogue on an LED screen as the play progresses. An open captioned performance is offered in Tucson on Thursday, March 28 at 2 p.m. and in Phoenix on Sunday, Sunday, April 14 at 7 p.m. For open-captioned or ASL-interpreted performances, patrons should request seats best suited to ASL interpretation or captioning when purchasing tickets. Large print and Braille playbills and infrared listening amplification devices are also available at every ATC performance with reservation. TTY access for the box office is available in Tucson at (520) 884-9723, or (602) 256-6995 in Phoenix. or via Arizona Relay at (800) 367-8939 (TTY/ASCII).

Fact Sheet:

American Mariachi

By José Cruz González

Directed by Christopher Acebo

Tucson Venue:

Temple of Music and Art

330 S. Scott Ave.

Tucson, Arizona

Previews Begin: Saturday, March 9 at 7:30 p.m.

Opening Night: Friday, March 15 at 7:30 p.m.

Closing Performance: Saturday, March 30 at 7:30 p.m.

Phoenix Venue:

Herberger Theater Center

222 E. Monroe St.

Phoenix, Ariz.

Previews Begin: Thursday, April 4 at 7:30 p.m.

Opening Night: Saturday, April 6 at 7:30 p.m.

Closing Performance: Sunday, April 21 at 2 p.m.

Ticket prices are \$25-\$90 and are available in-person at the Temple of Music and Art box office or via phone at (520) 622-2823; or at the Herberger Theater Center box office or by calling (602)

256-6995 in Phoenix. Tickets also can be purchased online at www.arizonatheatre.org.

Contact:

Steve Carr, The Kur Carr Group, Inc., (602) 317-3040

About Arizona Theatre Company:

Arizona Theatre Company (ATC) is the preeminent fully professional theatre in the state of Arizona committed to inspiring, engaging, and entertaining - one moment, one production, and one audience at a time. Boasting the largest seasonal subscriber base in the performing arts in Arizona, ATC is the only resident company in the U.S. that is fully based in two cities providing its wide array of programming and community outreach across the region. Now in its 52nd season, more than 130,000 people a year attend our performances at the historic Temple of Music and Art in Tucson, and the elegant Herberger Theater Center in downtown Phoenix. Each season of home-grown productions reflects the rich variety of world drama—from classics to contemporary plays, from musicals to new works—along with a wide array of community outreach programs, educational opportunities, access initiatives and new play programs. Designated The State Theatre of Arizona, ATC is led by Artistic Director David Ivers, Managing Director Billy Russo and a dedicated Board of Trustees.